

Regarding HR Bill # 6541 - and the hearing on Friday March 8, 2013
<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/TOB/H/2013HB-06541-R00-HB.htm>

Dear Environmental Committee,

I completely disagree with online training and testing for boater and hunter training.

Here's why:

New York, following the fatal capsizing accident last summer, is pressing on for instructor led courses for all boaters, not just those under 18.

The Sandy Hook shootings identify the failures of the existing system regarding gun safety.... are you really ready to loosen it further and allow minors and first time hunters / trappers to apply for a license to hunt with firearms or bow and arrows online ? We need more education and hands on training, not less !

The CT DMV now requires unlicensed adults and those from other states with expired licenses to take an 8 hour safe driving practice course at a CT licensed driving school. Why is "Drivers Ed" different from "Boaters Ed" ? There is actually more danger and knowledge required on the water.

I do not believe there have been open and fair hearings or adequate notice given regarding these changes.

I believe this law NEEDS to go through the LRRC (Legislative Regulation Review Committee). Any action to avoid or circumvent the process is tantamount to lying and cheating the public.

An online course cannot offer Q&A sessions or feedback from a trained professional (Marine or weapon). It cannot offer "learn from my mistakes" education.

No one can be sure who actually took the online test, or if they used a book / website for answers.

I **STRONGLY** oppose changing the regulations/laws regarding Boating and Hunter Safety training at this time.

Thank you,
Rick Delfosse
Norwalk CT

Please note I am a USCG certified captain and own a 43 foot sailboat and 20 foot powerboat. I have over 50 years of experience on the water and recently took the 8 hour CT gun safety course.